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Special Race Issue!

AVION

An Award-Winning College Newspaper

Volume 90, Special Issue

Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, Daytona Beach, Florida

July 8, 1985



Avion Photo by Doug Lando

Sacks defeats Goliaths to steal Firecracker 400

By Patrick W. McCarthy

Running a used engine, in a "research and development" car, with an improvised pit crew, Greg Sacks out-duelled heavily favored Bill Elliott to win the Firecracker 400 Thursday.

Sacks, driving an un-sponsored Chevrolet Monte Carlo SS, began battling back-and-forth with Elliott just after the half-way point in the 160-lap race.

Elliott, piloting the Ford Thunderbird he placed on the pole at over 201 mph, suffered from nagging fuel problems which eventually cost him the race. Elliott finished 24 seconds behind Sacks.

Sacks' Chevrolet was the product of Bill Gardner's research and development project originally designed to help veteran Bobby Allison.

Allison, who has been having a dismal season on the superspeedway circuit, expressed doubt the R&D work would benefit his vehicle. Sacks' car was using a completely different chassis set-up than Allison's, part of the unconventional testing the Gardner team is pursuing. Allison finished four laps off the leaders in 18th place.

Sacks' team operations manager, Gary Nelson, had to recruit crew members to man their pit during the race. This was the first race for the Gardner R&D team and Sacks' first-ever Grand National victory. He won a purse totalling \$45,350.

Sacks' pit stops were haphazard affairs, often taking 30 seconds or more, twice the average of experienced pit crews. Once, Sacks pitted in the lead, but left in 15th place. During the race, members of the Allison-pit crew were called on to help, as were his crews whose drivers had fallen out.

Following Sacks and Elliott across the finish line were Darrell Waltrip, Ron Bouchard, and Kyle Petty. Twenty two of the 41 cars that started the race were running at the finish.

Elliott and Sacks turned the 27th Firecracker into a two car battle when they tied up on lap 88 and began

running away from the field. Both drivers traded places several times before Elliott was forced to pit with fuel problems.

Ernie Elliott, Bill's brother and crew chief for the Coors Thunderbird, said a vibration developed which caused the car's fuel pickup system to use only

See SACKS, page 2



Avion Photo by Doug Lando

Bill Elliott (above) was forced to pit for fuel with only eight laps remaining, destroying his chances for a Firecracker 400 win.

Trans-American air race finishes in Spruce Creek

Gina Richardson wins four-day Air Race Classic in a Cessna 172, one out of three solo finishers

By Rob Dixon
Avion Staff Reporter

The Firecracker 400 wasn't the only championship race in Daytona this week. Gina Richardson won the ninth annual Air Race Classic. The classic began June 29 in Redding California and four days and 2559 miles later ended in Spruce Creek.

The 1985 Classic was a cross continent race routed across the southern tier of the United States. Richardson made overnight stops in Page, Arizona; Childress, Texas and Albany, Georgia.

Mrs. Richardson averaged a ground speed of 151 knots in her C-172. Unlike most of the contestants, Gina-Richardson flew the race solo.

Richardson began her professional pilot career at the age of 18. She has amassed over 25,000 hours of flight time. She instructs in airplanes, helicopters and gliders. She was the fifth woman to get a transport Pilot certificate, flying DC-3s.

Gini's husband also flies and their only child, Jill, is currently being upgraded to Captain in a B-727 for Alaska Airlines.

"The timing was wrong," she said, "I received my ATP before the public was ready for women pilots. The airlines were ready but not the people." She went on to say she wasn't bitter and feels like a pioneer who has helped pave the way for women in the industry.

Richardson had not flown her Skyhawk until the day of the race. The annual inspection, required by the rules of the race, was not completed until noon, the day of the race. She had to fly from Washington to Redding California and arrived thirty minutes before the deadline.

She described the weather along the route as excellent, and the winds as mostly favorable.

The second place finisher was a dual team. Caroline Grubbs of South Carolina and Bonnie Gann of Merritt Island. They flew a Cessna 441.

35 out of a field of 38 made it to Spruce Creek. Two pulled out before the race began and one had engine trouble over New Mexico and had to turn back.

The race was sponsored by the various chapters of the 99s, Thompson Development of Spruce-Creek and Embry-Riddle. Matthew Smith of Thompson Developing said "It was a great race."

Embry-Riddle was approached by Thompson to help support the classic. Robert Rockett, Dean of Student Affairs said, "We are glad to support any event that has to do with flying. Especially supporting women in aviation." At a post race Wine and Cheese Party at Embry-Riddle Rockett said, "All the women seemed very impressed with Embry-Riddle." They were given a tour of the facilities after the party.

The Embry-Riddle Precision Flight Team also supported the race

with personnel to handle the aircraft as they came into Spruce Creek Airport.

Barbara Selwitz, terminous chairman, organized and coordinated the end of the race and the post race activities for the Spruce Creek area. "Barbara has worked for more than a year organizing things on this end," said Matt Smith. "She has done a super job," he added "I think I would rather be racing but this is an experience in itself." Barbara commented. Some of her duties include: organizing the timing station, the awards banquet, tours and sightseeing and organizing transportation. "I couldn't have done it with out the help of the Spruce Coast 99s and the Spruce Creek Community residents," she said. "I would also like to thank the Embry-Riddle Flight Team for their support!" she added.

Barbara and her husband Jack live and work in the Spruce Creek Fly in Community. She has over 5000 hours and won the last Grand Prix air race held in the Mid West. "Every race is very serious" she said, "They are flying for the prize money."

The race must be flown in VFR conditions during official daylight hours. The racers must file a flight plan before each leg of the race. The aircraft must be fully equipped for IFR conditions and the pilot must be IFR rated. The aircraft engine must be rated at least 145 HP

See AIR RACE, page 4

Race traffic congests area

By Jim Banke

Although the Firecracker 400 was over a little after noon on Thursday, it was not until 2:30 p.m. that traffic leaving the speedway northbound on Bill France Boulevard was remotely back to normal.

An estimated 80,000 people attended the Independence Day classic.

Daytona police, anticipating the large amount of vehicles, had new routing regulations in effect. Similar re-routing is used during Speed Weeks in February.

Bill France Boulevard, which goes north from the Speedway, was one way. Catalina Avenue was also used to help funnel traffic away from the track after the race. Other roads near the Speedway were similarly re-routed to accommodate the heavy pre- and

post-race traffic.

Since Bill France Boulevard has its beginnings at the tunnel entrance/exit leading to the infield, it is the most natural way for those thousands of infield guests to leave the track.

An increased traffic flow was most noticeable a little before noon as fans left early, apparently assured that Bill Elliott would not win, or that Greg Sacks would. By 12:30 p.m. it was bumper to bumper.

Daytona Beach police officer D. G. Henri, a New Jersey transplant who has been in Florida for four years, monitored traffic at the intersection of Bill France Blvd. and Dunn Avenue. Dunn was closed off to all traffic from Bill France to Jimmy Ann Drive behind the Volusia Mall, and it was Henri's job to see that no one turned off Bill France on

to Dunn for any reason.

Locals who live at Westwood apartments or in the Dearwood townhouse area gave Henri the most trouble. With Dunn closed and Bill France one-way away from the speedway, residents could not get around very easily, and this made some upset.

A Westwood couple, who said they were new to the area, needed to get to Halifax hospital, where the husband worked. He was due at 2:00 p.m. and at the time it was 1:45 p.m. Clearly he was not going to make it if the officer did not let him pass, which Henri did not.

A Dearwood man wanted to drive through the roadblock that was in place. Henri asked the man to continue down Bill France, saying that he'd like to let

See TRAFFIC, page 4



Avion Photo by Patrick McCarthy

According to a University press release, an Embry-Riddle Cessna 172 was "damaged beyond economic repair" following a landing accident Thursday, July 4, at 5:50 p.m.

The pilot, Jonathan Akem, an FA-105 student on a local solo flight, was treated and released from Halifax Hospital. Akem, a 32-year-old student from Nigeria, was taken to the hospital after complaining of neck and knee pain.

The aircraft was attempting a landing on

Runway 6L when it crashed.

According to the University release, the accident "did not cause delays in airport traffic."

The 1964-model Cessna was placed on a cart and towed to a ramp at Daytona Beach Aviation.

E-RAU, Federal Aviation Administration, and National Transportation Safety Board representatives are scheduled to begin an investigation into the accident Monday.



Avion Photo by Patrick McCarthy



Avion Photo by Doug Lando



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Clockwise from upper left: Elliott's pit crew finds a good vantage point; 41 starts race for the green flag to start the 400; Fans pack the speedway July 8th; Ron Bonjard's Buick pits for fuel and a tire change; Buddy Baker streaks by as Lake Speed retires with an engine failure.



Avion Photo by Doug Lando

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SACKS

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17 gallons of the 22-gallon tank. "The car ran real good, but the vibration shook the fuel pickup loose," Ernie said. "The vibration started about 10 laps into the race and didn't ever get no better." Bill said, "We really don't know what it was." Regardless of what caused the problem, Elliott was forced to pit for fuel under the green flag with only eight laps remaining. Sacks could have cruised in to take the win.

Instead, Sacks thought he was locked in a battle for first with Terry Labonte. In fact, Labonte was one lap down and was in the process of trying to get back in the lead lap when Sacks made a risky outside pass in turn four on the final lap. "I was a little surprised," said Labonte. "I'm surprised, still surprised, and will be tomorrow too," he added.

Elliott's vibration problems made the controversy over the new carburetor restrictions a moot issue. Elliott said "I guess it equalized things."

Kyle Petty, who drove a Ford to fifth place, said "Having a

Chevy win says the rule works, doesn't it? A Chevrolet won, and that's what they were after."

"I don't think it [the rule change] killed the Fords. Don't get me wrong. I think the pit stops killed the Fords more than anything else," Kyle added. Ernie Elliott also deferred judgement on the carb rule, saying, "I don't think the rule change worked out like everyone thought it would. But this is just one race. I don't think you can judge it on just one race."

Sacks averaged only 153.730 mph for the 400-mile race. Six caution flags slowed the pace. Four racers were forced out due to accidents.

Morgan Shepherd and Connie Saylor tangled in turn two on the sixth lap. Shepherd blew a tire and was trying to limp back to the pits when Saylor skinned off his left side.

Shepherd expressed dismay that Saylor ran into his car "for what reason I don't know," said Shepherd. Saylor likewise voiced his displeasure over Shepherd's apparent lack of racing courtesy. "Morgan must think I am racing a bicycle or something and need

only about three feet," Saylor said.

The worst accident took place when Tim Richmond blew a tire on the trioval and smacked into the wall. Defending Firecracker champion Richard Petty swerved to avoid Richmond, but he "over reacted... I jerked left and then lost control," said Petty. He smashed into the wall behind Richmond.

"When I ran into the wall, it kind of jogged me," said Petty. "It was kind of hard on me," Richmond said. Petty was treated for facial cuts and bruises. "My head went forward and sort of bopped the wheel when I hit the wall," explained Petty.

Richmond suffered only minor lacerations in the accident, but was more vociferous in his condemnation of speedway safety procedures.

Richmond said the ambulance that picked him up was "moving slow, then we came to a gate into the infield and it was locked, we had to go back around another way." Richmond, noticeably upset, jumped out of the ambulance and stormed down pit road on foot. Crowds of fans

stood up and cheered the driver as he made his way to the track hospital. "If I had gone ahead and walked in the first place instead of waiting on the ambulance, I would've got here sooner," exclaimed Richmond. He called speedway safety procedures "a crock... They act like we don't get hurt out there. And we don't. We get killed."

Darrell Waltrip, third place finisher, said he's "absolutely thrilled to death," with his performances at Daytona this year. While Waltrip has never won a race at Daytona, he has "finished two races this year at Daytona and was third in each." Waltrip's finish leaves him second to Bill Elliott in NASCAR points standings at the half-way point in the season.





FIRECRACKER 400



Avon Photo by Mark Stern-Montaggy



Avon Photo by Mark Stern-Montaggy

Gant's crew watches Harry's Skoal Bandit speed through the trioval. Later disaster struck when Gant was forced from the race with a blown engine.

lower left: Two of Tim Richmond's pit crew prepare some lug nuts in anticipation of a pit stop.

below: The Firecracker racers thunder past the packed grandstands, heading for the start/finish line.



Avon Photo by Doug Landis



Avon Photo by Brian Mosdel



Avon Photo by Patrick McCarthy

Richmond condemned the Speedway's safety procedures in an ABC interview after blowing a tire in the trioval.



Avon Photo by Mark Stern-Montaggy



Avon Photo by Patrick McCarthy

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Thursday's race traffic was delayed when a semi-cab ran off Clyde Morris Boulevard near the ERAU main entrance. The truck crashed into a concrete utility pole, knocking out elec-

trical power to the campus for over an hour. Police charged the driver with auto theft, DWI and leaving the scene. A passenger was treated for multiple cuts and was hospitalized.



Action Photo by Brian Moseley

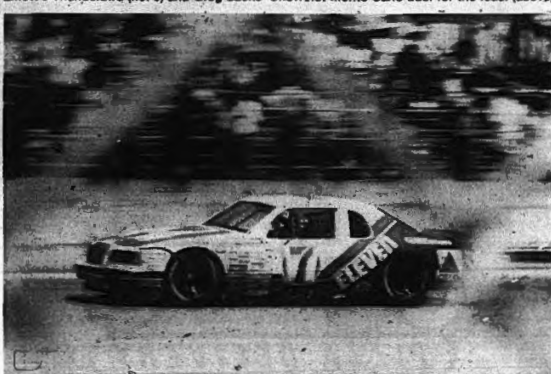
Like a funeral procession, Cale Yarborough's crew pushes their expired vehicle back to the garage. (above) A dejected Cale (below) said, "Man, this is double tough. I thought today was going to be our day." Yarborough dropped the transmission in his Harder's Thunderbird when he downshifted while pulling into the pits for a regular fuel stop. "When I came down pit road, I felt a vibration but didn't think too much about it," Yarborough said later. "When we tried to get out of the pits, we couldn't. The transmission was gone." Yarborough has had a rough season so far, failing to finish in six of nine starts. "This has been the year of trouble, I guess," added crew chief Weddell Wilson.



Action Photo by Patrick McCarthy



Elliott's Thunderbird (no. 9) and Greg Sacks' Chevrolet Monte Carlo duel for the lead. (above)



Action Photo by Patrick McCarthy

Kyle Petty cruised to a fifth place finish, (above) while his father Richard lost a duel with the wall on lap 64. "King Richard" suffered only superficial injuries in the crash.



Action Photo by Patrick McCarthy

TRAFFIC

(continued from page 1)

him in and understood the resident's problem, but that he had to follow orders.

"I'd rather have you mad at me than my supervisor. I have to live with him (the supervisor). I don't have to live with you," officer Henri said.

The motorcycle patrolman explained that many of the locals who give the police the most trouble are the ones who do not read the paper and make plans for race day. "They know there's going to be a race, and that they live

along a major road for race use. I can't understand why they don't plan for it."

While watching traffic with the officer, the Daytona police radio was active with calls and reports of minor incidents around the speedway area. Most of the chatter concerned vehicles in illegal lanes or trying to make illegal turns.

There was one report of a diabetic who had gone into shock near the intersection of Volusia and Fentress Boulevard while

waiting in congested traffic.

Public relations personnel at Halifax Hospital did mention they had treated several fans with minor injuries, some sustained from "tripping over their flip-flops." None of the drivers who participated in the race itself required treatment at Halifax for any reason.

By 2:30 p.m., traffic on Bill France had thinned out to normal. The roadblocks at Dunn, along with Officer Henri, were gone. The Exodus from the speedway was over.

AIR RACE

(continued from page 1)

but can go as high as 570 HP, and their must be an oxygen system on board. No modifications of the aircraft can be made during the race. Inspections are thorough both at the beginning and the end of the race. "Planning" said Schweitz "is the key to victory."

Each aircraft is assigned a handicap prior to the start of the race. Arriving at the finish line first does not necessarily mean winning. "If it were merely a

speed race the more powerful aircraft would win all the time."

Barbara commented. At the beginning of each leg the racer does a fly-by at full power to begin that segment of the race. At the end of the leg another timing fly-by is performed. "Occasionally a racer will make a mistake and do an illegal fly-by and will be penalized" Barbara said. The times are added up and the handicap is figured in to determine the segment winner

and the ultimate classic winner.

"The contestants strip all the excess weight from the aircraft that they can find to gain that extra knot of airspeed" Barbara explained.

"Plans are already in the works for next year's race" said Barbara. "We will probably go back to the first classic route from Santa Barbara, California to Toledo, Ohio" she explained. "Maybe I'll fly in that one" she exclaimed.

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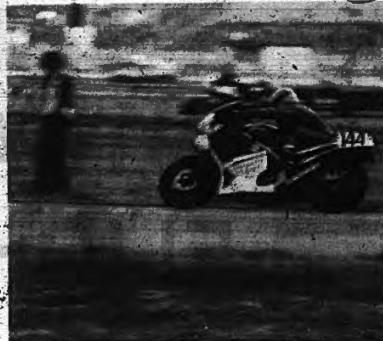
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Avon photos by Mark Stern-Montgomery

Dr. John's Team Moto Guzzi takes Revere 250

By Patrick W. McCarthy

"You can call us 'Dr. John's Team,' 'Dr. John's Guzzi,' 'Dr. John's Team Guzzi,' but don't call us 'Team Moto Guzzi.'" So reads the press handout for the Dr. John's Team Moto Guzzi.

One thing you can call them is "winners." Dr. John's Team Moto Guzzi came out ahead of the pack in Wednesday's Paul Revere 250 motorcycle race.

Riding an Italian-made 1000cc Moto Guzzi LeMans, Larry Shorts and Greg Smrz cruised to victory by almost a full lap over their nearest competition. They averaged 94.637 mph over the 3.56 mile road course.

The West Chester, Pennsylvania based team, already leading the U.S. Endurance Championship points standings, took advantage of a brake problem which forced Team Ontario to relinquish their lead midway through the race. Dr. John's Team Moto Guzzi extended their lead in the points standings and collected \$3,880 for the win.

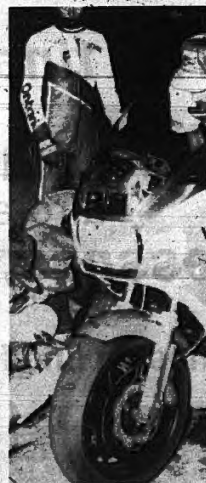
Team Ontario, from Athens Alabama, was forced into the pits with a front brake problem.

Team Ontario riders John Ashmead and Lynn Miller were detained for over five minutes while mechanics worked furiously to repair the Honda VF1000R's front brake.

North Ridge Racing, captained by Ralph Johnston of Geneva, Ohio, rode a Yamaha FJ1100 to a second place finish, almost one full lap behind Dr. John's Team.

Third place went to the Team Coconuts from West Palm Beach, riding a Honda VF1000. Fourth place went to Head Racing's Yamaha FJ1100.

Clockwise from above: Riders await the starter's signal; Paul Schwemmer's Team Daytona Honda 750 Interceptor wheels through an infield turn during practice; Team Ontario mechanics work feverishly to repair a front brake; The Moto Guzzi LeMans the Dr. John's team rode to first place; Nick Phillips, Larry Shorts, and Gregg Smrz celebrate in victory lane with the traditional champagne toast.



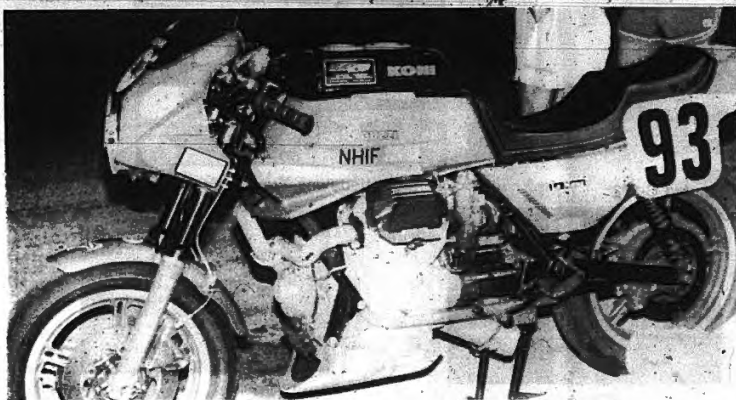
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